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Let's Not Make Our CIA A 'Public Whipping Boy'

THERE IS a danger inherent in the current moves to probe, revamp and shackle the Central Intelligence Agency in the wake of the Cuban rebel attack that fell flat on its wishful thinking.

The CIA's procedural and organizational shortcomings must be corrected and constantly improved if we are to protect our security. But it must be done without sacrificing the secrecy so vital to such an operation.

Let no one be deluded into thinking this undercover cloak-and-dagger type of warfare is one-sided. If anything, the Reds make us look like rank amateurs in this respect.

AMERICANS HAVE had the Rosenberg case, Colonel Abel's espionage ring, the defecting State Department employees and other incidents as a reminder of the sweeping efficiency of a far-flung espionage system the Reds wide-eyedly maintain doesn't exist.

In Great Britain, the case of the "brainwashed" George Blake who fed details of the entire British security and intelligence system to Russia is the latest memento of Red attacks against West-

ern security. Add such names as Fuchs, Maclean and Burgess, and the picture becomes more clear.

It adds up to one thing for sure: The Communists are making a concerted espionage effort, not only against scientific and military secrets, but against our own hush-hush attempts to protect ourselves by learning what they're up to.

EVERY INDICATION is that the Reds will step up their espionage activities in line with the increase in overall troublemaking that Vice President Johnson predicted just the other day. Are we, at this crucial time, going to jeopardize what effectiveness the CIA does have in the name of making it better?

President Kennedy's advisory board and the joint House-Senate watchdog committee being set up must operate in the strictest sense of prudence and caution, with necessary secrecy maintained at the cost of personal publicity and partisan advantage.

Review and improve the CIA, by all means. Our security depends in part on its effectiveness. But let's not allow the studies and probes to deteriorate into a public carnival.